

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1-18 (Cancelled)

19. (Previously Presented) A drive device for advancing an advancing element relative to a housing over a total advancing distance, comprising a spring device which advances in an advancing direction on a counter-element and on the advancing element which is movable relative to the counter-element, a tensioning device with a tensioning element for tensioning the spring device, wherein a predetermined distance between the counter-element and the advancing element or between the counter-element and the tensioning element that engages on the advancing element is able to be set according to the advance of the advancing element by a partial advancing distance that is shorter than the total advancing distance.

20. (Previously Presented) The drive device as claimed claim 19, wherein the spring device is formed by a helical spring which is tensioned between the counter-element and the advancing element or the tensioning element.

21. (Previously Presented) The drive device as claimed claim 19 wherein the predetermined distance is smaller or greater than the length of the untensioned spring device.

22. (Previously Presented) The drive device as claimed in claim 19, wherein the tensioning element for tensioning the spring device is movable relative to the housing and the advancing element in the direction of the counter-element.

23. (Previously Presented) The drive device as claimed in claim 19, the tensioning element can be moved in the direction of the counter-element or of the advancing element by a rotary device with at least one rotary element rotatable relative to the housing.

24. (Previously Presented) The drive device as claimed in claim 19, wherein the tensioning element has a thread, and the advancing element or the rotary element has a mating thread which interacts with the thread of the tensioning element.
25. (Previously Presented) The drive device as claimed in claim 19, further comprising a striker with an actuating element and a pusher element is provided, the pusher element being able to be pushed in the advancing direction by actuation of the actuating element.
26. (Previously Presented) The drive device as claimed claim 25, wherein the pusher element is formed by the advancing element.
27. (Previously Presented) The drive device as claimed in claim 26, wherein the actuating element protrudes from one end of the housing and has a continuation which protrudes from the opposite end of the housing.
28. (Previously Presented) The drive device as claimed claim 19, further comprising a locking device is provided for releasably fixing the advancing element relative to the housing upon tensioning of the tensioning device.
29. (Previously Presented) The drive device as claimed in claim 23, wherein the rotary element is fixed relative to the housing parallel to the advancing direction and forms the counter-element, and, by rotation of the rotary element, the tensioning element is movable relative to the advancing element counter to the advancing direction.
30. (Previously Presented) The drive device as claimed claim 23, wherein the tensioning element is secured against rotation relative to the housing and forms the counter-element, and, by rotation of the rotary element, the tensioning element can be moved in the advancing direction relative to the advancing element.
31. (Withdrawn) A method for discharging a fluid product from a container through an outlet in the container, in which method a plunger arranged remote from the outlet inside the

container is advanced in the direction of the outlet by a drive device with an advancing element and with a spring device, characterized in that, after the advance of the advancing element by a partial advancing distance which is shorter than the total advancing distance, the spring device is tensioned by a tensioning device.

32. (Withdrawn) The method as claimed in claim 31, wherein a drive device as claimed in one of claims 19 through 31 is used to drive the plunger, and the plunger is advanced by the advancing element of the drive device.

33. (Withdrawn) The method as claimed in claim 32, wherein upon tensioning of the spring device, a predetermined tensioning force in the spring device is generated by setting a predetermined distance between the counter-element and the advancing element or the tensioning element.

34. (Withdrawn) The method as claimed in claim 33, wherein a predetermined pressure in the container is generated, and the spring device is tensioned when the pressure drops by a certain amount.

35. (Withdrawn) The method as claimed in claim 34, wherein the drive device can be tensioned by the tensioning device during an advance of the advancing element.

36. (Withdrawn) The method as claimed in claim 35, wherein the plunger, at the start of the advance, is pushed in the advancing direction by a striker device.